



Madam C.J. Walker

INVENTOR AND BUSINESSWOMAN

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Self-Made Millionaire

Madam C.J. Walker built a business around one creation. She made a hair product for African Americans. It helped to grow new hair. It was called “Madam C.J. Walker’s Wonderful Hair Grower.” After just 12 years of running her business, she became a millionaire.

A sepia-toned portrait of Madam C.J. Walker, an African American woman with short, dark, wavy hair. She is wearing a light-colored, possibly white, garment with a ruffled collar and a necklace. A large, diagonal red watermark reading "For Review Only" is overlaid across the image.

FACT Madam C.J. Walker was the first woman to become a self-made millionaire.

Escape

Madam Walker was born on December 23, 1867, in Delta, Louisiana. Her name then was Sarah Breedlove. Her parents were freed slaves. Sarah was born free but lived in **poverty**. She worked in cotton fields. By the age of 7, both of Sarah's parents had died. She then lived with her sister and brother-in-law.

poverty—the state of being poor or without money



Sarah Breedlove lived in a cabin in Delta, Louisiana, until she was 7 years old.

"I know how to grow hair as well as I know how to grow cotton. I have built my own factory on my own ground."

Madam C.J. Walker

Sarah's brother-in-law treated her poorly. She left his home at age 14. She married Moses McWilliams. In 1885 they had a daughter named Lelia. When Sarah was 20 years old, Moses died suddenly. Sarah and Leila moved to St. Louis, Missouri. Sarah worked doing laundry and cooking.

FACT Sarah made \$1.50 a day doing laundry.



Women washing laundry

